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LETTERS TO  
A FRIEND

# Svetlana Book Not Runaway

By SALLY RYAN

NEW YORK — (AP) — Svetlana Alliluyeva's "Twenty Letters to a Friend" has inched its way onto some best seller lists, but a spot check indicates the autobiographical book by the daughter of Joseph Stalin is far from the runaway success publishing sources expected.

"Not the first person has asked about it," said Pauline Schwartz, book department clerk at Burdine's in Miami.

"Very disappointing," said a West Coast bookstore owner.

Harper & Row, the publisher declines to list sales figures, but says the book is in its first printing of 125,000 copies.

Book-of-the-Month Club, Inc., reports sales have run behind William Manchester's "Death of a President," its biggest seller this year, and ranks about even with Thornton Wilder's novel, "The Eighth Day."

## 'Didn't Fall Flat'

"It is not as high as most of us expected, but it did not fall flat," said Axel Rosin, Book-of-the-Month Club president.

The book is No. 4 on the New York Times nonfiction list, based on reports from 125 bookstores in 64 communities.

In Beverly Hills, Calif., David Sheeham, manager of Martindale's bookstore, says in two months he has sold only 50 of the 250 copies he ordered.

"It hasn't been the excitement we thought it would be," said Mrs. Betty McCloud, assistant book buyer for The Denver department store. "Most people probably would want to read it for historical information, but it didn't live up to those expectations. I don't feel it was that well written."

P. Ryan, Sally

## Sales 'Disappointing'

Louis Epstein, owner of the Pickwick Bookstore in Hollywood, says Mrs. Alliluyeva "doesn't say anything, and there was so much of the book already published in magazines." He termed sales "very disappointing."

The book was serialized by Life magazine, by the New York Times, and by The Denver Post.

"We actually have felt to some degree that national exposure as far as magazine articles are concerned does remove the cream from the sale a bit," said Mrs. Mildred Simpson, manager of Denver Book Co. "But it also can create interest and we feel it has done that with this book."

Mrs. Simpson said she had sold several hundred copies, about what she expected.